

Socialist Worker

For Workers' Power and International Socialism

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CLARK MUST TELL BUSH:

US president George W Bush is going to invade Iraq. Thousands of innocent civilians will be killed. There is every chance that the war will spread to engulf the whole Middle East. Already, there are reports that Israel is considering a nuclear attack on Iraq.

Helen Clark and the Labour Party leadership say they don't support a new war against Iraq.

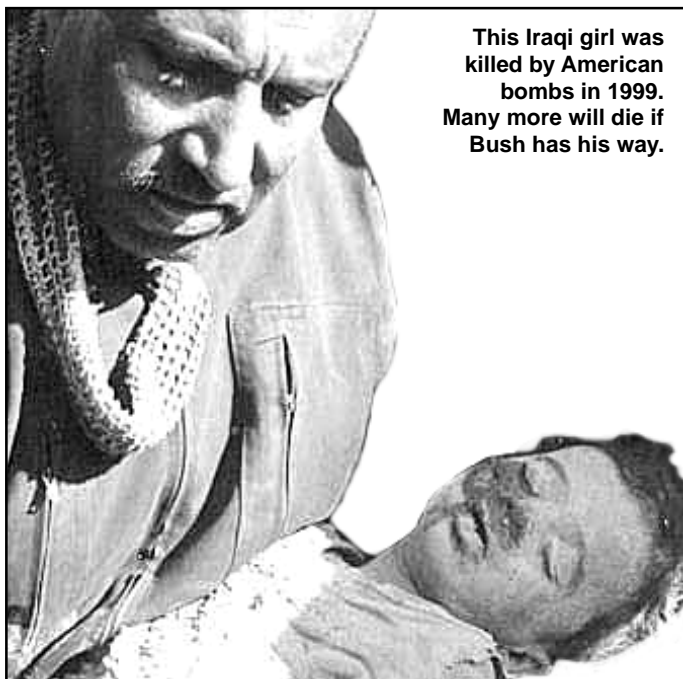
But they are also proud to be "very very good friends" with the warmonger Bush.

Clark and her government should take a stand for peace.

They should publicly call on the United States not to attack Iraq. And they should withdraw New Zealand troops who are part of the American occupation of Afghanistan.

This would give great encouragement to the anti-war movement around the world, especially in the US.

But to get Labour to take such a stand we must build a powerful movement that unites all opponents of war.



This Iraqi girl was killed by American bombs in 1999. Many more will die if Bush has his way.

DON'T ATTACK IRAQ

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America to invade Iraq

STOP THIS MADNESS!

By DON FRANKS

The evidence is mounting—US led invasion of Iraq is imminent.

The business page of last week's *Dominion Post* noted that the US was importing millions of extra barrels of oil for military use in Iraq.

Boeing and other US companies are reported to be working round the clock to produce extra missiles.

The *New York Times* recently stated, "thousands of marines have stepped up their mock assault drill."

The US airforce, according to the *Times*, "is stockpiling weapons, ammunition and spare parts, like aeroplane engines, at depots in the United States and the Middle East."

Despite opposition from 60% of his own people, Bush's closest ally, British prime minister Tony Blair, has made it clear that he will support the attack on Iraq.

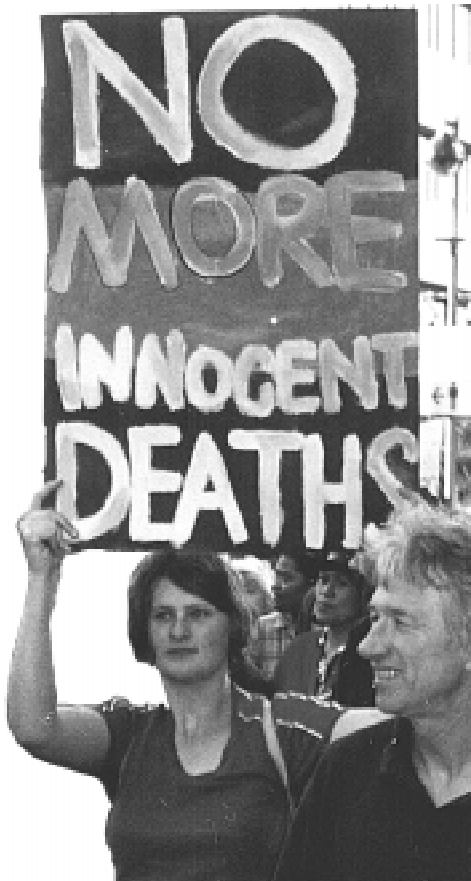
Already the Royal Navy aircraft carrier *Ark Royal* has been dispatched to the operational area of an attack on Iraq. Army tank regiments have begun special training.

Diplomatic moves also signal war's approach.

The recent Iraqi offer to admit United Nations' weapon inspectors was brushed aside by the Bush administration. "No negotiation!" is America's war-cry.

The latest leaked US war plan involves a massive air assault on Iraq, causing civilian casualties and destruction on an unimaginable scale. This is to be followed by a US invasion of up to 50,000 troops.

To ordinary people such carnage and cruelty is insanity, but to America's rulers it's just a matter of protecting their global empire.



Anti-war movement begins to mobilise

By DAVID COLYER

Around Aotearoa the anti-war movement is beginning to mobilise against the attack against Iraq.

Auckland's Global Peace & Justice forum has decided to support the international day of protest against the war, on September 28.

Peace Movement Aotearoa (PMA) has launching a new anti-war petition, printed on the back page of this paper.

The first batch of signatures will be presented to parliament on September 11.

A petition like this is a great way of organising opposition to the war.

The size of the movement can increase, as people who sign can also take away petition forms, and so become anti-war activists themselves.

Anti-war coalitions can be built as activists get together to organise petition stalls.

When thousands of signatures are presented at parliament, it will not only demonstrate opposition to the war, it will show that the foundations of a powerful anti-war movement have been built.

Socialist Worker has a new anti-war leaflet based on the articles on this page. To order copies see contact deals on page 11.

NZ must not support this war

Helen Clark says her government will not support a US invasion of Iraq.

But, now the election is over, there is increasing right-wing pressure on Labour to change its mind.

The *Dominion Post* editorial of August 10, called on the NZ government to, "weigh the merits of again standing alongside like-minded countries in the coming months."

Labour cannot be relied on to stand up against pro-war pressure.

They sent SAS troops to Afghanistan, and have stayed silent about proven US atrocities since that war began.

Labour is also desperately seeking a trade deal with the US, their strategy is to offer military and political support in return.

If we don't act to stop it, Labour's cynical opportunism could drag us into World War 3.

Beneath the *Dominion Post's* rabble-rousing about terrorism and tyrants, one fact is clear: the country with the largest military machine, the most weapons of mass destruction, and the most aggressive foreign policy, is the United States of America.

Led by George W Bush, they are on the brink of setting the Middle East alight with the flames of war. They are even prepared to use nuclear bombs in the process.

This madness can and must be stopped.

Every person who cares about the future of civilisation is needed in the ranks of the anti-war movement.

Labour united with bosses' favorite

"It's Labour that's chosen big business and chosen to follow whatever George Bush's agenda is". So says Green co-leader Rod Donald about Labour's decision to do a deal with United Future. Donald is absolutely right.

The Council of Trade Unions (CTU) asked Helen Clark to include the Greens in government. Business NZ and other capitalist organisations called on her to pick United Future. It's clear who Labour listens to.

One of the main policies highlighted in United's agreement with Labour was the fast-tracking of Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) to fund transport.

PPPs means handing over control, but not ownership, of public services to private companies. The companies, of course, want to make a profit. In this case by charging road tolls.

In Britain, where the scheme was pioneered by Tony Blair's La-



bour government, corporations are also profiting from the running down of hospitals and schools. This is the reality behind Peter Dunne's "common sense" health policy.

And according to Progressive Coalition Party deputy leader Matt Robson, United Future leader Peter Dunne wants the government to support a US military incursion into Iraq.

CTU president Ross Wilson predicted that if Labour did a deal with United alone, it would block progress on social democratic policies that might benefit workers and "would lead to considerable difficulty and dissatisfaction".

Wilson is closer to workers than any of the politicians and is better placed to gauge the mood at the grassroots.

The dissatisfaction with parlia-

mentary politics was already there before the election, seen in the lowest voter turnout on record. Less than 77% of enrolled voters went into a polling booth on July 27.

The Greens could have tapped into that dissatisfaction and boosted their support if they'd taken a strong stand to the left of Labour. Sadly, they spent most of their energy stressing how "responsible" they would be in government.

Now the Greens need to look outside parliament to backing mobilisations on the streets.

For the election also served up a warning. NZ First in particular boosted its support by promoting racism and scapegoating. This divides workers and weakens us against the capitalists.

It's only by crystallising the dissatisfaction at the grassroots into protests and strikes that unite workers that we can overcome scapegoating and force Labour to stop listening to big business and start listening to us.

Socialist Worker printing press appeal

From the GE-free and anti-war movements, to the teachers' strikes and school students' rebellion, more people across Aotearoa are getting involved in the fight for a better world.

That means more people are interested in socialist news that tells them about the struggles of grassroots people, here and around the world. And in socialist analysis that explains why we live in a world governed by profit and war, and what we can do to change it.

In many areas sales of Socialist Worker newspaper are increasing, but our print run re-

mains in the hundreds. Through our leaflets we have been reaching thousands.

Because leaflets and posters are given away free, this outreach work is increasing the drain on our fragile finances.

So Socialist Worker has launched a new fundraising appeal.

Our target is to raise the \$10,000 needed to finish paying off our printing press. This is a tall order, but it can be done, in 1999 we raised over \$10,000 to help buy the press.

Since then our press has printed hundreds of thousands

of newspapers, leaflets and posters, helping to spread socialist ideas and build many united campaigns.

We need your help to continue, so please send us what money you can.

And if you have any suggestions or examples of good fundraising techniques, let us know.

Send donations to Box 13-685 Auckland. Make cheques out to "In Print Publishing".

Kia kaha
DAVID COLYER
Editor



'Union Save': cashing in on workers' pain

By DON FRANKS

In the summer of 1974 Labour brought in a new accident compensation law.

This law removed workers' rights to sue employers for damages over a workplace accident.

In place of that, there was a new system of compensation covering all workers. Accident victims got ongoing payments at 80% of their gross average earnings.

At the time, most unionists welcomed this as a step forward.

They must have been right, because bosses have been attacking ACC ever since.

A big blow came in 1998, when parliament passed the Accident Insurance Act.

That replaced the old ACC with competing private schemes, cutting workers' entitlements under the guise of "freedom" and "choice."

This new privatisation was dubbed "Freedom to lose" by the Council of Trade Unions (CTU), who ran one of their biggest campaigns in opposition to the new law.

The need for workers' compensation continues to this day; more than 33,000 workplace accidents were reported during the year March 2000–March 20001.

From a worker's point of view, this is a bloody scandal, but to insurance corporates it's just another chance to profit.

One of the vultures creeping across the industrial accident battlefield is American corporation AIG, marketed here under the attractive sounding label of "Union Save".

In a letter sent out with the Service and Food Workers Union (SFWU) magazine, Union Save plays on workers' fears that ACC would not "pay enough", claiming their scheme "could pay you up to \$32,500 cash for less than 33 cents a day!"

"And you can spend the money anyway you please", they tell us—so nice of them.

"You might want to spend the money on a new TV, home appliances, or a trip to visit relatives."

Almost makes you want to have an accident.

And "one lucky union member", drawn from the hat, will win 12 months free coverage, (paid for by your less lucky workmates.)

There's catches, of course.

The small print, on the back of the brochure, details some of the many exemptions to getting a pay-out.

One of those is involvement in anything "illegal". Most strike action is illegal under the present laws, so involvement in a strike would automatically remove your Union Save protection.

Council of Trade Unions president Ross Wilson told *Socialist Worker* the CTU was "definitely against" private insurance schemes for industrial accidents.

"These cheap schemes can be very discriminatory to those on low incomes, or with disabilities."

Doesn't union endorsement of private schemes undermine the CTU's long struggle for a better ACC?

"Arguably it does", said Ross.

Ross Wilson said that there had not yet been any debate about Union Save in the CTU.

It's time there was.

A spokesman for Union Save boasted to *Socialist Worker*:

"At the moment we have eight unions on board—the SFWU, National Distribution Union and a few smaller ones. Right now we're negotiating with the Engineers."

Union Save has only one real aim—to make money for their company. The scheme can be altered at any time, as it's totally under the company's control. Any unionists taking part can only do so as utterly powerless individuals—the opposite of union solidarity.

Instead of collaborating with Union Save bosses, unions should be fighting to rebuild a better ACC, under organised workers' control. Where does your union stand?

'We want to fight for a decent wage rise'

By DAVID COLYER

More than 200 kitchen staff and orderlies at Central Auckland's four big hospitals are considering further strike action.

The workers, members of the National Distribution (NDU) and Service and Food Workers (SFWU) unions struck for two days last month because the Auckland District Health Board (ADHB)—under pressure from the government—is demanding they accept a below inflation pay increase of 2%.

Job security is another major concern.

Health board management are trying to exploit this. They are threatening to contract out kitchen and orderly work, but say if workers accept the 2% deal, their jobs will be safe for another two years.

But workers at Auckland Hospital, who talked to *Socialist Worker* on July 18, the first day of the strike, say they won't accept what is in-effect a pay cut.

Kaumari Enoka, a kitchen assistant, explained:

"It's not our fault ADHB is in deficit. We're the lowest paid workers. We want to fight for a decent wage rise.

"Our first claim was for 5%, then 3.5% and now 3%. Inflation is 2.8%. The total cost of the extra 1% would be \$65,000."

Unlike the workers, management has so far refused to make any compromises.

"What we are asking for is what a manager gets in his bonus," said Richard, an orderly. "They are robbing the poor to feed the rich."

The way Richard sees it, health workers are providing a "world class standard for sub-standard wages.

"The government has to realise that running a hospital is expensive. If the money is not there, then services have to be cut," he says.

Matthew Fogarty, another orderly, believes, "Something in the [health] system is not right".

A string of recent headlines from the *NZ Herald* support his view:

"Hospital leaves hurt boy for 6 days; Rotorua Hospital make staff redundant in spite of shortages; Struggling hospitals

\$10m short of savings target; Public hospitals face deep cuts".

But perhaps the most shocking headline was this one: "Auckland Health board chairman confident on big cut".

It seems health cuts are now something to be proud of.

NDU organiser Solly Southwood says that by linking the 2% offer to the government's demand that Auckland District Health Board costs not rise by more than 2%, management have made the dispute political.

This means workers need to consider political, as well as economic action.

Solly says that, before the election, Green and Alliance MPs, and the SFWU, which is affiliated to the Labour Party, wrote to health minister Annette King. But so far there has been no response.

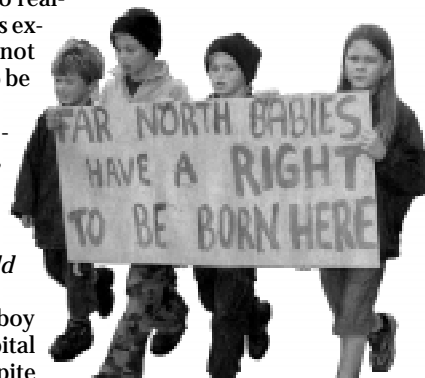
How to get King's attention was shown in a *Herald* story with a very different sounding headline: "Far north rejoices in battle won".

The story told of Annette King's personal intervention to find a temporary solution to staffing problems at Kaitia Hospital.

Obviously the election had a good deal to do with King's prompt action. But the hospital would not have become a national election issue if people in the Far North had not, "fought tooth and nail to hang on to their hospital services", as the *Herald* article put it.

A combination of industrial action by health workers, and protests by the public, would force Labour to give our hospitals the funding they need, and health workers the pay increases they deserve.

The unions representing health workers are in an ideal position to initiate such action.



Kaitia health march

Air Pacific workers fight sexist rules

By DAVID COLYER

Workers suspend industrial action as a sign of "good faith" during negotiations. But the company continues tactics aimed at making life more difficult for union members.

As the number of strikes increase, more workers in Aotearoa are experiencing this kind of nasty behaviour from their bosses, who see "good faith bargaining" as an opportunity to kick workers while they're down.

It's an international trend.

Cabin and ground crew at Fiji's Air Pacific have been striking for improvements in a number of areas.

Firstly, they want a pay increase.

Then, changes to sexist rules which discriminate against cabin crew.

Written into the cabin crews' contract is an assumption that they are "beauty queen" women, whose job is as much about being ogled by passengers, as it is about ensuring a comfortable and safe flight.

Because of this, cabin crew are forced to retire at 45—12 years before ground crew.

They also face strict rules about weight and height. These are particularly tough for

the growing number of men working inside the planes.

Another major issue is an attempt to change ground crew shifts from 10 to 12 hour. As well as resisting this move, the workers want extra compensation for unsocial hours.

Atta Sighn, general secretary of the Fiji Aviation Workers Association (FAWA), told *Socialist Worker* that it was important that New Zealanders travelling to Fiji on Air Pacific knew about the struggle of the workers and the way the airline is behaving.

As we go to press the dispute is before a Fiji government arbitration tribunal, and the strike suspended.

But this has not softened the boss's bullying tactics.

Air Pacific has stopped—for the first time in 34 years—automatically deducting union dues from workers' pay.

The company is also evicting the union from their offices in a company-owned building at Suva airport. The union moved in four years ago, back then management refused their offer to pay rent.

Atta said the strike had received mostly positive media coverage in Fiji and there was strong public support.

He was confident that the arbitration tribunal would find in favour of the union, suggesting workers could get more than through direct negotiation with the airline.

But other evidence suggests the tribunal is more likely to side with the company.

Australian airline Qantas owns 46% of Air Pacific. Qantas appointed new CEO John Cambell, and Qantas plans to take over strike-affected Air Pacific services.

Qantas's dealings with the New Zealand government over the possible sale of Air New Zealand, shows the company's influence.

The Air NZ case also highlights how governments value their "national flag carrier" airlines. That's why the Fijian government stepped in to end the strike.

Air Pacific workers would be in a stronger position to influence the tribunal if—like the company—they had ignored "good faith" and continued industrial action.

Once the arbitration process is over, the union will come under a lot of pressure to accept the tribunal's decision.

However, if arbitration fails to give the workers what they want, Atta warned there was "no guarantee of industrial peace".

Air New Zealand workers can't rely on airline bosses

By DAVID COLYER

Last year the Labour government paid \$885 million to bail-out Air NZ. Next year it will fork out another \$150 million, but the airline needs still more.

A top-level debate is raging about how to find the extra money, and whether Qantas having a 25% stake in Air NZ would be in the interests of Kiwi capitalists.

Two NZ unions have also added their voices.

The Engineer's Union (EPMU) has come out strongly in favour of the Australian bid, after assurances that its members in Air NZ's engineering section will get more Qantas maintenance work.

But the Flight Attendants Association, whose members work for both companies, is worried that Qantas will pull out of the NZ domestic market, resulting in more job losses.

Unfortunately, both these positions leave workers relying on

airline bosses to look after them.

But airlines, like any company, increase competitiveness and boost profits by squeezing staff.

Since the Air NZ bail-out, this has meant a wage-freeze and staff cuts; the company went to court to stop a pilot's strike last month.

Qantas bosses see Air NZ's engineers as an asset, in part because they are cheaper than Australian engineers. Qantas will not be rushing to give them a pay rise.

Whether Air NZ and Qantas bosses end up as allies against new-comer Virgin Blue, or in a brutal fight with each other, they will want their workers to carry the costs of competition.

At the moment, union leaders have become cheerleaders for opposing corporate sides. But cheerleaders always remain on the sidelines.

The alternative is for aviation workers in New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific to actively support each other's battles against redundancies and for better wages and conditions.



2500 Qantas engineers in Australia struck in November last year

MARKET CHAOS: WHAT IT MEANS



In recent weeks Wall Street has been on a roller coaster ride.

At one stage 14% had been wiped off the value of the major companies listed on the US stockmarket, sending shock-waves around global financial markets.

JUDY COX, from *Socialist Worker's* sister paper in Britain, looks at what's behind the turmoil.

"Don't panic, don't panic!" says George W Bush, like Corporal Jones of a Dad's Army standing guard over the world's stockmarkets.

This was exactly what US president Herbert Hoover said in October 1929, days before the Wall Street Crash plunged the world into a decade of misery and conflict.

In recent weeks the world's stockmarkets have seen catastrophic falls followed by wild recoveries.

Bush wants us to believe that the arrest of a few chief executives and new laws on accounting "transparency" will resolve any problems.

It won't. The fundamental problem behind the market turmoil is the growing realisation that the profit rates of US capitalism are not as high as has been claimed.

The corporate chickens are coming home to roost.

The ups and downs of the financial markets are reported daily, even hourly, on the news. Yet their workings remain incomprehensible to most people.

These markets can seem independent of the real economy where goods are made and sold, and profits reinvested.

But the stockmarkets are linked to the real economy and affect it in turn.

The basis of profit under capitalism is the exploitation of workers.

Some profit goes to the consumption of bosses, the rich and their hangers-on.

Some is also used by firms on immediate spending, perhaps buying new equipment to better compete with rivals.

The rest is what underpins the financial system.

A firm may have had to borrow money to produce and so make profit. The bankers want their money back, with interest added of course.

The portion of profit that goes into the financial system fuels the gambling at the heart of the stockmarkets.

When people buy and sell shares in a company they are gambling on getting a future share of any profits that company may make.

That gambling creates a logic of its own, as the bets spiral further away from any connection with the real economy.

A huge apparatus of specialist institutions, like investment banks and fund managers, has grown up dedicated purely to speculation.

Traders bet trillions of dollars on things like the future prices of shares, future commodity prices or the shifting values of currencies against each other.

Amid the gambling the market traders behave like a herd of swine when they sniff a chance to make profit. Money pours into markets and prices soar as traders rush to get a piece of the action.

Eventually, the gap between the goings-on in the financial markets and the real economy which is the basis of profit gets ever larger.

Suddenly it can all come crashing down or go into wild swings.

At the heart of the chaos on the financial markets today is panic about the real state of the US economy.

The lies firms have told about profits are causing fear that hopes of ever-rising share prices on the back of a booming economy will be dashed.

The US stockmarket boom meant people with shares felt wealthy.

They were confident to run up debts to fuel consumer spending, which helped fuel the boom further.

The result is that the US is one of the biggest debtor nations on earth.

But even with debt-fuelled consumer spending and increasing levels of exploitation of workers, the reality of the US economy was not so great.

While the stockmarket bubble inflated, the real economy struggled just to get back to where it had been in the 1970s.

The imbalance between the stockmarkets and the health of the real economy has long been obvious to many at the heart of the system. But they are trapped by the logic of the system itself.

Alan Greenspan, chair of the Federal Reserve US central bank, warned in 1987 about the markets' "irrational exuberance".

That didn't stop him lowering interest rates to make borrowing cheaper.

This helped protect the US economy from the 1997 crash which hit "Asian Tiger" economies such as Thailand, South Korea and Indonesia.

But the stockmarkets cannot expand forever, because they are not really independent of the real economy.

The financial markets exaggerate any boom in capitalism. But when capitalism goes into recession the markets sharpen the crisis.

When the economy is expanding, more and more raw materials are used to produce more and more goods that are sold to apparently ever-eager consumers.

Because capitalism is unplanned, eventually the raw



Argentines revolt ag

materials, and the machinery and labour needed to transform them, begin to run short of supply.

They begin to cost more than anyone planned for, squeezing the profits of firms that need these things.

The high prices paid for a particular commodity, like microchips or office buildings, entice more capitalists to produce it.

Too many capitalists pile in, and a crisis of overproduction develops.

Goods go unsold, and companies which cannot sell all they hoped to see profits slump.

They can go bust and throw workers onto the dole.

Those firms, and the workers who lose their jobs, can no longer afford to buy goods, which hits other firms and workers.

Suddenly wider layers of people become nervous that hard times are ahead, and spend less.

With the smell of recession and crisis in the air, trivial things can then be enough to burst the stockmarket bubble.

Traders worry that some of their bets could go wrong. They rush to sell stocks and shares to get out before things get worse.

That can see share prices plummet, and then loans taken out by firms on the expectation of rising share prices can't be repaid.

This leads to a "credit crunch". Even healthy companies find sources of credit dry up, and are pushed to

the wall.

Panic sweeps the financial system.

The very institutions that helped generalise the boom now spread the panic.

The aspects of capitalist globalisation trumpeted by its advocates—like the fast movement of capital across national borders—now spread the crash across the world.

Stockmarket crashes stem from, rather than cause, economic crises, but when in full swing they then deepen the problems in the real economy.

Governments champion the "free" market. But when a slump hits they intervene—bailing out banks and propping up companies.

In 1998, the US government spent millions bailing out the shady Long Term Capital Management fund.

But governments' room for manoeuvre is limited.

Bailouts require huge amounts of public spending. And one problem solved is often a problem stored up for the future.

One certain thing is that stockmarket crashes have a huge impact on ordinary people, as those at the top try to make us pay the price for the chaos.

Slumps and crashes mean the veil is torn off the obscenity of a system no one can control.

Market madness is a powerful argument for socialism and a democratically planned economy.

NZ economy going down: WORKERS MUST FIGHT

By VAUGHAN GUNSON

On TVNZ's *Telstra Business* programme, minister of finance, Michael Cullen, admitted he was worried by events on Wall Street.

"I think there's probably more downside risk now than would have been the case two, three or four weeks ago given what's happening on Wall Street and in the markets internationally," he said.

Being the largest single economy in the world, any financial crisis in the US has global repercussions. The effects will be felt in New Zealand, which is why Cullen is worried.

The US is New Zealand's second largest trading partner. A recession in the US will mean reduced spending by US workers, causing a fall in profits for New Zealand businesses selling to the 'States.

New Zealand's other

trading partners will be similarly affected, leading to declining total export revenue.

A worsening world economy has already led economists to predict that last year's 4% growth in the economy will be halved.

That 4% growth rate—higher than all New Zealand's major trading partners in recent times—has been due to an economic cycle out of sink with the world's major economies, and because of high world prices for wool, meat and dairy products in 2000 / 01.

Coupled with a low NZ dollar against other major currencies, farmers have been making windfall profits.

This has had an effect on other sectors of the economy, particularly in rural regions, as farmers increase spending and capital investment.

This "rural boom" has led to a temporary fall in unemployment in regions

like Northland and the Waikato, helping contribute to an official unemployment rate of 5.1% nationally—the lowest in 14 years.

But commodity prices are now spiralling downwards. The ANZ Bank's World Commodity Price Index is down 23% on its peak in April last year.

Consequently, dairy multinational Fonterra, New Zealand's large company, plans to slash next year's payout to dairy farmers.

Declining profits for the rural sector and the likelihood of a global recession will see the New Zealand economy flounder. That will pull put increasing pressure on the Labour government.

Business will place more demands on Labour to implement pro-business policies to maintain profits.

Each percentage drop in growth equates to a \$400 million drop in

government revenue. This will put more strain on health and education, which are already woefully under-funded.

Despite increased employment, workers barely benefited from the recent spurt of economic growth, with hourly earnings falling slightly by 0.1% over the past year.

A downturn will see bosses try to crimp even more from workers.

To stop them, and to put pressure on Labour to deliver adequate social services, workers must take action.

Our power lies in grassroots organisation, in the workplace and on the streets.

Economic downturn intensifies the struggle between capitalism's main contending classes: the working class and the capitalist bosses.

The bosses are mobilising to protect their profits. We need to be organised and willing to fight them.

ainst economic crisis

Three candidates talk about the war

The capitalist media mostly ignored the war during the election campaign, and candidates were seldom challenged for their views on this crucial matter.

Despite this, the debate rumbled on through the campaign. The views of three different candidates reveal different attitudes to the war—and to democratic rights at home.

ANNETTE KING, Labour

After several months of trying, Peace Action Wellington (PAW) representatives finally got an interview with ANNETTE KING, Labour MP for Rongotai and minister of health.

Earlier, King's staff asked that PAW activist and *Socialist Worker* journalist Don Franks be excluded from the meeting. But others were able to pass on this report.

PAW: "[We are concerned that] no attempt was made by the United States government to use diplomacy in the wake of the September 11, instead they began bombing Afghanistan within a month of the attacks".

King: "There was no other option, the Taliban refused to hand over Bin Laden."

PAW: "But what about the Taliban's offer to extradite Bin Laden to Pakistan to be tried—an offer that was rejected out of hand by George Bush?"

King: "There was no such offer... I don't know where you're getting your information from, you believe yours and I'll believe mine."

PAW: "It was reported in the *Evening Post*."

King: "Rubbish."

PAW: "Did you consult any of your electorate members about sending NZ troops to Afghanistan?"

King: "No, why would I?"

The minister refused to withdraw support for the 'war on terrorism', but stated Labour would not support a US invasion of Iraq.

JILL OVENS, Alliance

Union activist JILL OVENS stood for the Alliance in Mt Albert, against prime minister Helen Clark.

"I chose to run in that seat to expose the fact that Helen Clark, a former anti-nuclear campaigner, had completely sold out over the US attack on Afghanistan", Jill told *Socialist Worker*.

"It was very difficult to get the issue out. Only one public forum was held in the electorate, and Helen Clark didn't show up at it. In fact the Labour Party didn't send anyone at all to that meeting."

Jill was unhappy that the media did not consider the war as an election issue.

"I sent stuff out all over the place; several anti-war press releases to the *Herald*, who ignored them all. I got one letter printed

by the *Dominion*, and that was my lot."

She was also critical of the Alliance leadership.

"The Alliance didn't take the opportunity to raise the war in the election."

"Laila Harre could and should have raised it on the radio and on television, but did not. I was very disappointed with our performance in this respect."

"We should be critical of our campaign and learn from the mistakes."

Jill noted that two Alliance candidates who consistently agitated about the war—herself and Mike Treen—got a much higher vote than other Alliance candi-

dates who avoided the issue. The two polled over 400 each; the average Alliance vote in Auckland was around 200 votes.

Regarding the future of the anti-war movement, Jill said:

"It's important to keep raising the issue of detainees—we have people being detained in New Zealand right now just because they come from Afghanistan—and of course there's not even any proof that Afghanistan had anything to do with September 11."

"It's very scary listening to Bush right now", Jill concluded.

"We need to get out there and mobilise people to oppose a war on Iraq."

NICK KELLY, independent

NICK KELLY, an activist recently expelled from the Labour Party for his out-spoken opposition to war and globalisation, stood against commerce minister Paul Swain in the safe Labour seat of Rimitaka. He polled 376 votes—more than many Alliance candidates.

Nick told *Socialist Worker*:

"I voiced opposition to the war at all candidates meetings I attended, in fact I was the only person in this electorate to raise it. Both the Alliance and the Green candidate didn't feel bombing the Third World was significant for the election."

Nick got mixed reactions:

"A number of people did seem concerned that NZ was allowing Washington to set our foreign policy. Most thought US invasion of Iraq was a terrible idea and that the NZ government should

strongly oppose it.

"A lot of people did seem to think something had to happen after September 11."

"And Western media information about the 'War on terror' has left many confused as to the current state of the war. Many weren't sure if the US were still bombing Afghanistan."

Socialist Worker asked Nick about the future of the anti-war movement. He stressed, "The importance of doing things out in the suburbs."

"Part of my campaign was

holding forums on genetic engineering and globalisation in the electorate.

"Many activists tend to limit their activities to the inner city and totally neglect the suburbs and the rest of New Zealand."

"In building the left, it's important to remember that we, as activists, have to reach out to workers and people from all over the country."

"If this means catching a 30 minute train ride to the suburbs or working in areas you don't know, then so be it."

Immigration laws deny human rights

By GEORGE MITCHELL

After forty days at sea in a clapped out, jam packed, 14 metre long fibreglass fishing boat, 56 Sri Lankan boat people recently washed up in Dili, capital of the impoverished new nation of East Timor.

Reports allegedly had these potential asylum-seekers heading a further 8,000 kilometres through the wild winter seas of the southern ocean to New Zealand.

Rightly expressing the near impossibility of such a journey succeeding, foreign affairs minister Phil Goff said that "given the size of the vessels used, Australia is their actual destination" and that they (the boat people), "were bound to say that they were not heading for Australia to avoid being interdicted by the Australian navy".

However this didn't prevent him from contradicting himself in a further statement that, "With no evidence to suggest the men were political refugees, New Zealand would treat them as economic migrants. We don't accept queue-jumpers".

When the Labour-Alliance coalition government took in 131 Afghan refugees from the Tampa last September the praise they received internationally for this action intensified a low-level war of words between the Australian and New Zealand governments over their respective immigration policies.

Australian immigration minister Philip Ruddock accused the New Zealand government of operating a "back door" policy.

He claimed that allowing a growing number of migrants and asylum-seekers into New Zealand would "open the floodgates and encourage more illegal immigrants to head to New Zealand and know that it's a jumping stone to Australia".

This is because after three years migrants would qualify for New Zealand citizenship and New Zealand citizens do not need a visa to enter Australia. They can live, work and study there but are now not eligible—since February 2001—for any welfare payments until they apply for permanent residency visas.

As the criterion for Australian permanent residency visas is excessively based on the ability to speak the English language and slanted towards highly skilled occupations, most of those who qualify are white and this is an unmistakable attempt to restrict the immigration of migrants from the Pacific Islands and Asia.

However much the two countries dispute each other's immigration policies, the irony is that both share a common attitude towards migrants, which is ultimately racist in character.

Both countries have been built on the labour of economic migrants and their descendants, even the majority of Maori have been forced from their iwi's traditional homelands into urban areas in search of work.

Along with thousands of Europeans, small groups of Asian (Chinese) gold-miners first arrived in Otago in 1861. Twenty years later, in 1881, the government of the day passed laws, which forced every Chinese person arriving in the country to pay a poll tax of ten pounds. By 1896 this had gone up to one hundred pounds and was not abolished until 1944 and it was 1952 when Chinese people were finally allowed to become New Zealand citizens.

Helen Clark has recently apologised to the descendants of these people for this treatment but this has not prevented her government from passing new restrictions to limit immigration, or from enacting policy to

**New Zealand
has been
censured
in a report
by the
United Nations
Human Rights
Committee**

turn the Mangere Refugee Centre into a detention centre with barbed wire and security guards.

The events of September 11 and the arrival of the Tampa refugees, who were New Zealand's largest intake of asylum seekers to date, were used as an excuse to achieve this transformation.

What was not reported widely at the time was that this number of asylum seekers were not in addition to, but became part of, New Zealand's annual agreed resettlement quota of 750 people, which are accepted anyway, under the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Resettlement Programme.

In a recent legal challenge, against the government's new immigrant policy, a high court judge in Auckland ruled that New Zealand's actions of detaining asylum seekers are unlawful.

Justice Baragwanath said that the policy breached the UN Convention on Refugees, which says that these people should only be detained "when necessary" and only when there was a "real risk" of absconding or of a criminal offence being committed.

At the same time New Zealand has been censured in a report by the United Nations Human Rights Committee, saying that it was concerned about the "possible negative effects of new legislation and practices on asylum seekers" which included removing the "immigration risk offshore".

For example, in Indonesia the New Zealand government has distributed a pamphlet written in four different languages warning people not to try to make the 8,000 kilometre journey.

It then goes on to warn: "you probably won't make it. You and your relatives will more likely drown in the attempt." And that if you do make it your claim for refugee status is likely to be dismissed.

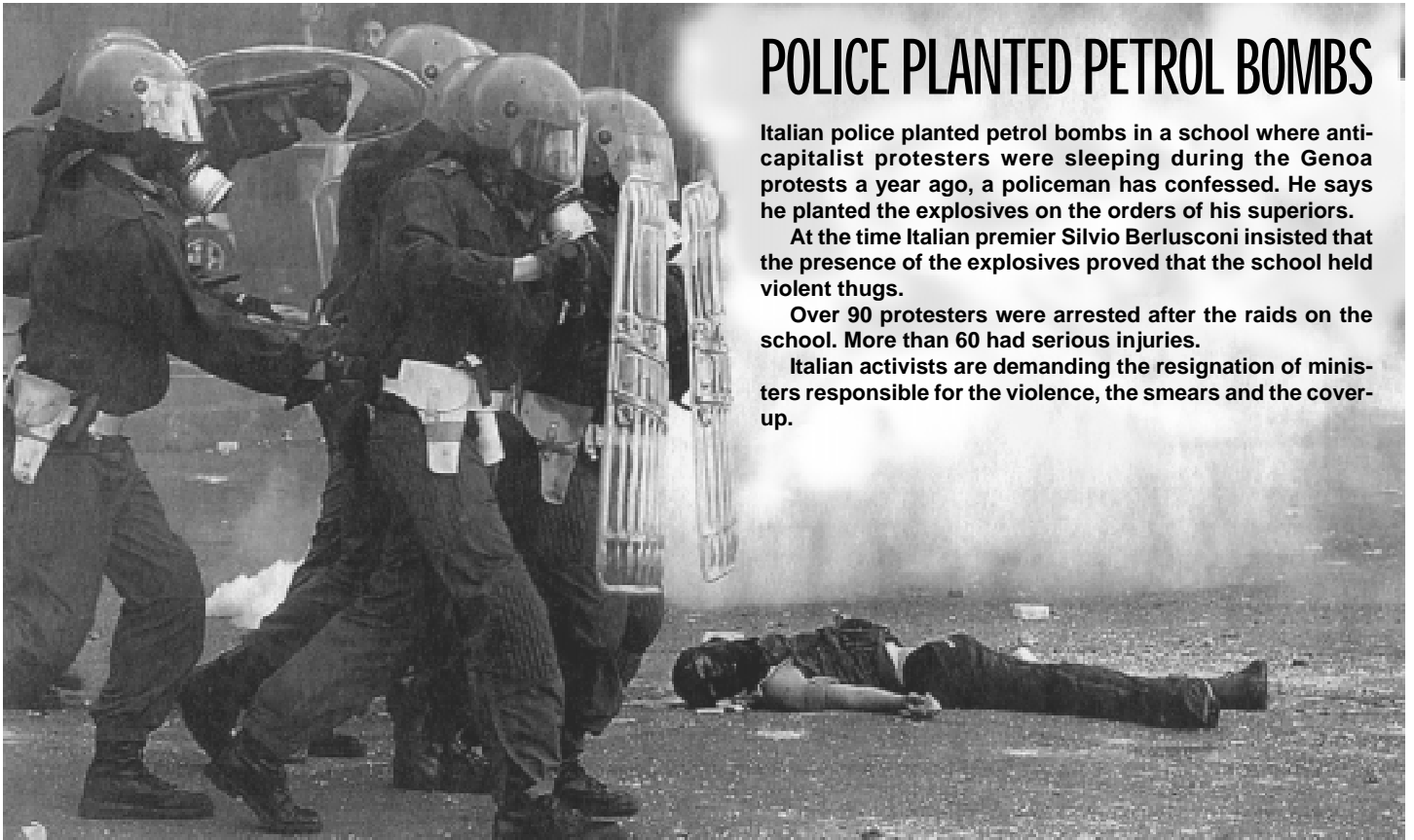
The current neo-liberal economic doctrine of free trade insists on the complete freedom of capital to cross borders in search of profits. But at the same time, the rich nations of the world are throwing up more and more barriers to restrict the movement of people.

Because this movement is largely from the Third World to the First World, these barriers always take racist forms and are exploited by right-wing politicians to gain power and divide the working class by scapegoating migrants and blaming them for declining health, education, housing and employment resources.

New Zealand's contradictory and hypocritical laws and practices towards migrants and asylum seekers show that the government has lined up with the bosses in order to deny workers, migrants and asylum seekers their full human rights and to keep power and wealth in the hands of the few.

Sri Lankan boat people in Dili





POLICE PLANTED PETROL BOMBS

Italian police planted petrol bombs in a school where anti-capitalist protesters were sleeping during the Genoa protests a year ago, a policeman has confessed. He says he planted the explosives on the orders of his superiors.

At the time Italian premier Silvio Berlusconi insisted that the presence of the explosives proved that the school held violent thugs.

Over 90 protesters were arrested after the raids on the school. More than 60 had serious injuries.

Italian activists are demanding the resignation of ministers responsible for the violence, the smears and the cover-up.

Millions wasted on war Millions left to starve

While the US and Britain prepare to use vast resources for war, 14 million people in southern Africa have been left to starve.

People in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe are particularly affected.

Politicians claim that the suffering is because of drought or "African corruption".

In truth people are dying because they are the subjects of a crazed mass social experiment: take a poor society, let the market rip, and see what happens.

Far from showering prosperity on Africa, the market prescriptions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank have produced bigger mounds of corpses.

Today in Malawi two million people need food aid. Yet earlier this year the IMF told the Malawian government to sell off two thirds of its grain reserves,

kept for such emergencies.

They said the government should sell the grain then buy food when necessary—but prices rose fourfold.

More recently the IMF and the European Union (EU) told Malawi to sell another 28,000 tonnes of maize to repay debts.

Malawi had a system of state marketing boards which could provide subsidised food. The boards prevented a famine during the last great food shortage in Malawi ten years ago.

But under instructions from the IMF and World Bank, state marketing boards have been privatised.

Today there is some food available but half of Malawi's population are too poor to buy it.

In Malawi between 1998 and 2000 2.8 million farmers received "starter packs" of free seeds and fertilisers. This led to a bumper

crop of 2.4 million tonnes of maize.

But the IMF, World Bank and EU governments worried this was "distorting the market", so the government restricted the number of farmers receiving these packs. The result was a fall in grain production of one million tonnes, slightly more than Malawi now needs to avoid famine.

South Africa needs four million tonnes of food over the next three months. The country has about 850,000 tonnes of maize for export.

Other countries, such as Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, have exportable surpluses of around 220,000 tonnes between them.

Western governments will only give food aid to a handful of organisations in Zimbabwe because of the campaign against Robert Mugabe. This means or-

inary Zimbabweans will die.

The famine is about political priorities and the way capitalism works.

Western governments and the drug multinationals have allowed AIDS to rampage through the continent.

And, for all the promises of debt relief, Western governments and banks still suck vital resources from Africa.

Malawi is still spending as much on debt repayment as it is on the health service.

In Zambia, where one million people are HIV positive, debt takes a third more than is spent on health.

One hundredth of the resources going into war in Iraq would secure all of the 14 million African lives in danger.

But Bush and Blair would rather let them die than confront the priorities of capitalism.

CONTACT THE SOCIALISTS IN YOUR AREA

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★ WELLINGTON

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Email: **socialist-worker@pl.net**

Socialist Worker
is on the internet
http://au.geocities.com/swo_nz/

Socialist Worker WHERE WE STAND



SOCIALISM

Capitalism is a system of exploitation
which generates inequality, crisis and war.
Although workers create society's wealth,
it is controlled by the ruling class for its
own selfish ends.

Socialism can only be built when the
working class takes control of social
wealth and democratically plans its
production and distribution to meet
human needs, not private profits. This will
eliminate all class divisions in society.

Stalinist countries such as China and
Cuba, just like the former Soviet Union
and the Eastern bloc, have nothing to do
with socialism. They are state capitalist.
We support the struggles of workers
against every dictatorial stalinist ruling
class.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORMISM

The present system cannot be
reformed to end exploitation and oppres-
sion, contrary to what Alliance, Labour
and union leaders claim. It must be
overthrown by the working class.

Capitalism's parliament, army, police
and judiciary protect the ruling class.
These institutions cannot be taken over
and used by the working class.

To pave the way to socialism the
working class needs a new kind of
state—a democratic workers state based
on workers councils and workers militia.

INTERNATIONALISM

Workers in every country are exploited
by capitalism, so the struggle for social-
ism is global.

We campaign for solidarity with
workers in other countries. We fight
racism and imperialism. We oppose all
immigration controls. We support all
genuine national liberation struggles.

We are internationalists because
socialism depends on spreading working
class revolutions around the world.

LIBERATION FROM OPPRESSION

We fight for democratic rights. We
oppose the oppression of women, Maori,
Pacific Islanders, lesbians and gays.

All forms of oppression are used to
divide the working class.

We support the right of all oppressed
groups to organise for their own defence.
Their liberation is essential to socialist
revolution and impossible without it.

TINO RANGATIRATANGA

We support the struggle for Maori self
determination.

The government's approach to Treaty
claims has benefited a Maori elite while
doing little for working class Maori.

Tino rangatiratanga cannot be
achieved within capitalism. It will only
become a reality with the establishment
of a workers' state.

REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant
sections of the working class have to be
organised into a mass revolutionary
socialist party.

We are in the early stages of building
such a party through involvement in the
day-to-day struggles of workers and the
oppressed.

The Socialist Workers Organisation
must grow in size and influence to provide
leadership in the struggle for working class
self-emancipation.

We need to revitalise the unions with a
rank-and-file movement.

If you like our ideas and want to fight
for socialism, then join us.

If you like reading **Socialist Worker**, send in this form:

- ☐ I want to attend a socialist meeting
- ☐ I want to join the Socialist Workers Organisation
- ☐ I want to subscribe to Socialist Worker (enclose \$30 for a year)

NAME..... PHONE.....

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Post to Socialist Worker, PO Box 13-685 Auckland

No NZ support for the 'war on terrorism'

We the undersigned condemn all forms of terrorism, including state terrorism, and support all those responsible for terrorist acts being brought to justice.

We completely oppose the US government's 'war on terrorism' which has resulted in the deaths of, and injuries to, thousands of civilians in Afghanistan. We are horrified that the US government has now declared a 'second front' in South East Asia; and by their increasingly aggressive preparations to launch a new war against the people of Iraq. It is inevitable that as the 'war on terrorism' spreads, civilian casualties will continue to increase.

We are appalled at the US and British governments' threats to humanity by the use of nuclear terror, in particular their stated willingness to use nuclear weapons against the people of Iraq, Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, Syria and Libya.

We reject the NZ government's military and political support for the 'war on terrorism', and the link between this support and the advancement of 'free' trade agreements.

ACCORDINGLY

- We insist that the NZ government cease all military and political support for the 'war on terrorism', and recall all NZ military staff involved, including the SAS troops;
- We demand that the NZ government condemns any military action undertaken in the name of the 'war on terrorism';
- We call on the NZ government to initiate and support positive ways of reducing the threat of terrorism and war, in particular by improving the social and economic conditions of the peoples of the world.

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE

SUPPORTED BY

Catholic Worker Movement Aotearoa, Centre for Justice and Peace Development, Global Peace and Justice Auckland, Indonesia Human Rights Committee, Magdalena Aotearoa, National Consultative Committee on Disarmament, Nelson Peace Group, Pax Christi Aotearoa-NZ, Peace Action Wellington, Peace Council Aotearoa, Peace Foundation, Peace Movement Aotearoa, PET Southernstar Associates, Socialist Worker, Trade Aid Movement of Aotearoa/NZ, Urban Vision Social Action Group, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (Aotearoa).

Please return signed copies to PMA, PO Box 9314, Wellington.

First deadline is 9 September 2002; check for further deadlines.

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